

## U. S. Lesh Writings and Letters

S823

1825-1965, undated

1 folder

Rarer Books and Manuscripts Division  
Indiana State Library

Processed by: Christina Baich, April 2006  
Finding aid updated: Laura Eliason, 10/30/2015

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### Biographical Note:

Ulysses Samuel Lesh was born on August 9, 1868, in Rock Creek Township, Wells County, Indiana. He graduated from the University of Michigan Law School in 1891. He then practiced law in Huntington, Indiana, periodically throughout his life. On June 27, 1894, he married Minnie Fulton with whom he had three sons, John M., Lex, and Joseph F. Lesh served as Huntington City Attorney (1902-1904) and Huntington County Attorney (1907-1909). He was a staunch Republican and spent time and money supporting the local party.

From 1917 to 1921, Lesh served as Assistant Attorney General under Ele Stansbury. He was then elected Attorney General and served two terms (1922-1925). While Attorney General, Lesh succeeded in making the Indiana State Fair a state agency. After leaving office, he formed a law partnership with his two sons, practicing in Indianapolis until 1938. He then returned to Huntington where he resumed his former association with his younger brother, Eben Lesh. After his brother's death in 1955, U. S. Lesh continued to practice alone. In addition to his legal career, Lesh authored two books, *A Knight of the Golden Circle* (1911) and *Three Profiteers* (1934). He died on June 5, 1965.

Founded in 1856, the original purpose of Knights of the Golden Circle was to create a new territory centered around Havana, Cuba, that would encompass Central America and a great deal of Mexico and the United States. The Knights were able to recruit Union soldiers during the Civil War to act as spies for the Confederacy. Among the Union spies was Lambdin P. Milligan, whose trial by military tribunal was to spur the famous Supreme Court decision *Ex parte Milligan* (1866). This decision affirmed the constitutional right of all citizens to be tried before a jury of their peers.

#### *Sources:*

*Ancestry Library*. Indiana State Library. 28 Apr. 2006. <<http://www.ancestrylibrary.com>>.

Banta, Ray E., comp. Indiana Authors and their Books, 1816-1916. Crawfordsville, IN: Wabash College, 1949.

## Scope and Content Note:

The bulk of the collection consists of speeches and pamphlets written by U. S. Lesh. "Ex Parte Milligan," "A Knight of the Golden Circle," and "General James R. Slack: War Democrat" all deal with the Knights of the Golden Circle. "The Three Guards" is an educational play written by Lesh set during the Revolutionary War. There are also two letters written by Lesh to a Mr. or Dr. Kelley.

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## Item Listing:

1925 Oct. 22	Speech delivered at a banquet for the Committee on Standards of Literature of the Indiana Parent-Teacher Association pamphlet (2 copies)
1947 July 26	"Ex Parte Milligan," pamphlet (2 copies)
1956	"A Knight of the Golden Circle," pamphlet (2 copies)
1961 Sept. 1	Lesh, U. S. to Mr. Kelley, TLS
[1964 Dec. or 1965 Jan.]	Lesh, U. S. to Dr. Kelley, TLS
undated pamphlet	"The Three Guards: A Dramatic Lesson in American History,"
undated	Speech, "General James R. Slack: War Democrat," typescript, 8 p.

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## Collection Information:

<i>Size of Collection:</i>	1 folder (10 items)
<i>Collection Dates:</i>	1925-1965, undated
<i>Provenance:</i>	Darwin Kelly, 13 August 1965
<i>Access:</i>	This collection is open for research.
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<i>Related Holdings:</i>	
<i>Notes:</i>	

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